2 Peter 3 [13] But, according to his promise, we look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

Intro: A. Belief in the destruction + reconstruction of the universe a general one.

1. This that controls the Bk. of Revelation.
   "For the 1st. heaven & the 1st earth are passed away, and the sea is no more."
   "And he that sitteth on the throne said, 'Behold, I make all things new.'"
2. But the idea is not peculiarly Xn.
   a- As far back as Exile, prophet heard Jehovah say, "Behold I create new heavens + a new earth, and the former things shall not be remembered nor come to mind."
   b- This idea grew in the 2 cent. before X.
   The very times suggested it
   The world seemed to have reached old ag.
   Wars + commotions.
   Cities destroyed
   Corruption of world powers
   c- The use of the apocalypse—
   1' a form of writing which presented ~~vividly~~ striking pictures of the destruction of the world + of the creation of a new world.

Bk. of Daniel, Baruch, Revelation.

2' The apocalyptic writings abound in figures of speech and are grossly misunderstood when interpreted literally.

3. Concerning the use of the Bible for predictive purposes.

a – We are, by nature, ignorant of the future.

b – If we are to have definite information regarding the future, God must give it.

c. God has given us no map of the future.

1'. Prophecy deals in large outlooks with ideals, giving no details of the specific.

a – Prophecy concerning the X.

Not specific & detailed descriptions of the actual X.

b – Prophecy concerning the future events.

1'. All interpretation of Scripture for the purpose of fixing a definite time to specific events have failed.

a – The study of Scripture for such a purpose has developed 2 schools opposed to each other

3)

b – Every date fixed has failed, not because of a miscalculation, but because Scripture contains no map of the future.

Mt. 24 36 – "But of that day and hour knoweth no one, not even the angels of heaven, neither the Son, but the Father only."

B. Of what use, then, are such writings in the Bible? Why are they there? What purpose did they serve then? Can they help us now?

I. First, the present world must be weighed and found wanting.

1. Every true reformer & prophet weighs the world in which he lives & finds it evil.

   To the patriarchs the world was evil.
   " Moses & the prophets " " "
   Jesus looked upon a world in sin.
   The apostles beheld a wicked world
   Tiberius, Claudius, Caligula, Nero – openly defying God.
   Herod & Caiphas controlling the Chosen Peop.
   The faithful ones persecuted & defeated.

The Spirit of discontent is the beginning of reform.

2. The first sign of a healthy moral nature is to see the evil & feel the need of a change.

II. Secondly, the reformer & prophet must see the better world that shall take the place of the old one.

1. Its the vision of a better world that makes the present one so distasteful and dissatisfying
   - a- The vision of the Israelites in Canaan caused Moses to lead them out of Egypt.
   - b- John the Baptist saw the coming Messiah & thundered against the hypocrisy & wickedness of his day
   - c- Luther & Wesley saw a living & faithful church and proceeded to overthrow the deadness in the church.
2. The prophet who aims to reform must ever hold up two pictures.

Before	After.
Present sinful world	The future world wherein dwelleth righteousness.

III. Thirdly, the prophet & reformer must grasp the possibility of ending the old & starting the new.

Since things constantly change they must be made to change for the better.

1. Scoffers who say, as of old, "From the day that the fathers fell asleep all all things continue as they were from the begining of creation.

These are but superficial & shallow thinkers

2. All things do not continue as they were

a- The man who visits the town of his birth.

b- The outer world has changed.

How different the cities, the goods, the vocations, the pleasures,

How different the heavens & the earth thru telescope, spectroscope, microscope, & the sciences!

c- The inner world has changed.

The same passions & longings, the same quest for truth & knowledge & power & happiness — but how the expressions of them have changed! — how different they are. The line-up of classes & masses of races & nations, of rich & poor has been utterly transformed.

If Peter & John & Paul should come back to earth today, they would exclaim "Our old world has passed away, the heavens & the earth are no more."

3. But tho the heavens & the earth today would be new to Peter & John ~~& Paul~~, it is not the new heavens & earth of their prophecies, is it?

After becoming acquainted with it Peter & John would condemn it as evil & predict their new one wherein dwelleth righteousness— the doing of right, the doing of God's will, not merely on the part of a few, but by the whole of mankind in all the departments & relationships of life.

Conclusion - Does this understanding of our text do it justice? Is it a fair interpretation?

That depends on what you emphasize. If you confine the text to its mere external & imaginative form, dealing with the destruction of outward things, perhaps not.

But if you take into consideration the real motive & purpose of the text - to indicate the coming of a world of righteousness purged of selfishness & evil, I think it is a fair interpretation.

The vision of the new world gives us hope & courage to fight on against evil & ever work & watch & pray for the coming of the better.

We become co-workers with God and use his patience & longsuffering, instead of stepping aside & waiting to see God, impatiently & wrathfully utterly destroy.

8/ It enables us to realize that God is with us now. That Jesus Christ is a present conquering Lord, not an absentee Lord who is coming bye + bye.

It makes the church a bride, not a widow.

It helps us to work together for good sanely + effectively, instead of becoming vain speculators as to what is going to happen.

Ps. 85 "Truth shall spring out of the earth, + righteousness shall look down from heaven